



# CareSearch: Embedding palliative care into aged care systems across Australia

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Ageing Asia Policy Roundtable  
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**CARESEARCH**<sup>®</sup>  
palliative care knowledge network

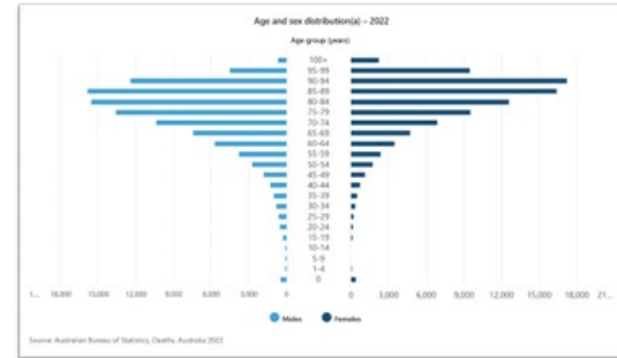
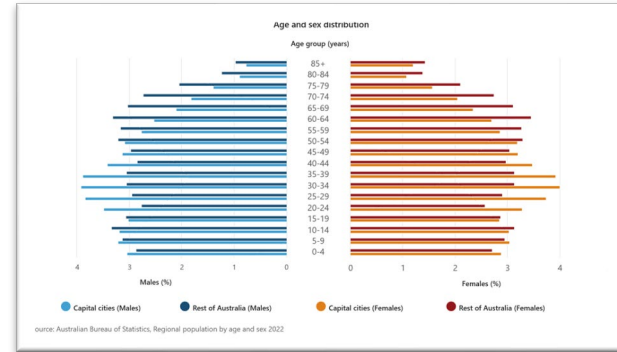
CareSearch is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care  
[caresearch.com.au](http://caresearch.com.au)



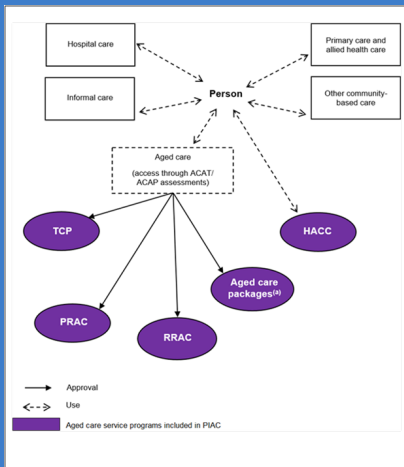
# Ageing, caring, dying in Australia

As with most countries, Australia is experiencing population ageing and increased demand for services and support.

We are living longer and dying older.



# Australia's aged care system



With an ageing population, there is increasing recognition of the importance of care availability to support the older person's needs and that addresses both social and health care across ageing through end of life to death.

- Complexity of funding and responsibilities between states and territories
- Homecare, residential aged care, and transition care
- Diversity in geography, cultures and backgrounds
- End of life, chronic disease progression, and palliative care needs of older people

Image source: : Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018. Cause of death patterns and people's use of aged care: A Pathway in Aged Care analysis of 2012–14 death statistics. Cat. no. AGE 83. Canberra: AIHW.

## What do we mean by Palliative Care?

Palliative care is person and family-centred treatment, care and support for people living with a life-limiting illness. It helps people live as fully as possible. It is not just the last days of life.

Palliative care is for people of any age. It can be offered in the person's home, a hospital, a hospice or an aged care (nursing) home.

# Palliative Care in Australia



The National Palliative Care Strategy and Implementation Strategy underpin palliative care delivery in Australia.

The Department of Health and Aged Care funds a range of national palliative care initiatives and programs. These initiatives and programs mostly focus on education, training, quality improvement and advance care planning.

CareSearch including palliAGED is a national project funded by Department of Health and Aged Care.

How does the CareSearch Project support the aged care workforce and services to provide palliative care and care at the end of life?



# CareSearch including palliAGED



CareSearch provides nationally available websites (CareSearch and palliAGED) to connect health professionals and the general public with **trustworthy, evidence-based information** and resources in palliative care.

The palliAGED website and resources function as the aged care hub of CareSearch. palliAGED continues the guidance of the APRAC and COMPAC guidelines. The CareSearch project partners with others to further support palliative care in aged care by extending activity reach, integrating resources and approaches, and engaging with specific area expertise.

## The role of knowledge



Knowledge based on research evidence is a core element of the CareSearch Project

Built out from Knowledge to Action (KTA) framework where evidence is a central construct. Process for translating to action involves: identifying needs, adapting knowledge to context, addressing barriers, tailoring solutions, monitoring use and evaluating

Our solutions and contexts need to acknowledge the online environment and the intended user of the knowledge.



## Strategies used to implement palliative care within aged care

### Aged Care Journeys in Palliative Care



The following project strategies have been used to support the development of palliative care within aged care:

- End user engagement and partnerships
- Promotions, dissemination and communication
- Evidence repository and contextualised knowledge
- Learning and practice resources
- Digital solutions
- Transparent quality processes, program logic model, and evaluation activities
- Considered against individual – service/organisation – sector/system

## Purposeful partnerships and end user engagement

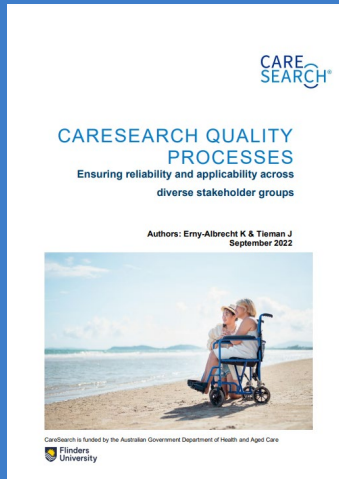


Working with aged care: Aged care staff, health professionals, services, advocacy organisations, policy groups, older people, palliative care and aged care projects

Mechanisms for sector engagement: Forums, Project Advisory Groups, Consumer representatives, Task Groups (eg needs assessment), Co-design processes, Feedback mechanisms, Pre-release user testing and review, Post release evaluation, Conferences and presentations, Novel interventions (e.g. CareHack, Dying2Learn)

Creating opportunities to develop new knowledge through research studies and training within palliAGED and CareSearch, and through Flinders University with project partners

## Enabling access to evidence



CareSearch and palliAGED provide complementary evidence resources.

CareSearch: Clinical evidence syntheses, Latest Australian research, Systematic review collection, Grey Literature database, PubMed searches

palliAGED: Evidence Centre and Practice Centre with aged care service and context focus, palliAGED search resource

## Addressing contexts

Access to care  
is a human right.



CareSearch: Content focus goes across community, across the systems, across life course.

- Specific resources for: Patients and Carers, Older Australia, Diversity
- Knowledge hubs for: GPs, Nurses, Allied Health, Primary care, Acute care

PalliAGED: Aged care specific website Recognising careworkers, nurses, GPs, pharmacists, service responsibilities including aged care standards

## Learning and practice resources



Mapping education landscape and available resources. Brokering access to aged training and education from online courses, National Palliative Care Program learning materials, and formal qualifications

Developing specific learning materials and practice resources:

- palliAGED Practice Tips (Careworkers and Nurses)
- palliAGED learning modules on the website
- SCORM packages to enable use in their local learning management systems
- Aged Care Journeys in Palliative Care for Careworkers

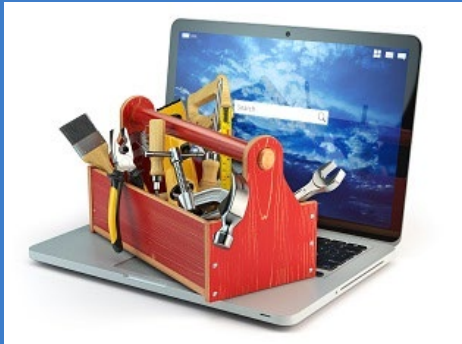
## Digital solutions



Using the reach and flexibility of digital systems to create digital solutions that reflect sector needs and support better care

- CareSearch: PubMed searches
- Apps: ELDAC Careworker, CareSearch GP, palliAGEDnurse
- Interactive forms: SPICT, Medicines form, self-care plan
- CarerHelp: Carer self-assessment and resources for diverse communities

## Service level approaches



The challenge is to embed changes at the service level and/or sector level.

Testing service level approaches such as:

- palliAGED learning resources: Provides a solution for orientation of new staff and helps monitoring workforce training. Learning modules can be embedded in service's local LMS
- ELDAC Digital Dashboard: Framework of end-of-life measures harvested from clinical systems to inform care responses, service performance and reporting

## Building awareness and engagement



Digitally supported through SEO, Health Direct Information Partner, social media presence, partnership cross promotion and referral links

Active program of promotion to sector through monthly CareSearch and palliAGED newsletters and blog series featuring sector perspectives, clinical research, aged care and/or palliative care research and projects

Strategic communications on why “My Care Matters” not just promoting what is available. Value proposition for the sector



## The value of partnerships



**Advance Project:** Learning and practice resources for primary care and dementia resources

**ARIIA:** Palliative care and end of life resources included in the Knowledge Hub for Aged Care

**CarerHelp:** Information and resources for family carers of someone living with a terminal illness.

**ELDAC:** Activating care sector through Linkages program, toolkits, and digital and technology innovations

**SA Palliative Care Navigator Trial:** Community facing resource sharing pathways and searchable directory of services.

So do these strategies work?



Over one million visits to CareSearch and palliAGED websites in the 3-year period (Google Analytics)

26 aged care services have installed modules onto local learning systems  
Potentially influences care at 12% of all RACF beds in Australia

Data from usage and evaluation reports for the 2020-2023 period

palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets: 14,000+ orders received and delivered and 98,000+ downloads of individual Tip sheets

palliAGED modules: 40,000+ completed modules

12,000 responses to module QI surveys:

- Over 97% improved their understanding
- Over 93% intended to change how they practised

[www.palliaged.com.au](http://www.palliaged.com.au)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/palliaged/>

Twitter: @palliAGED

[www.caresearch.com.au](http://www.caresearch.com.au)

Twitter: @CareSearch

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/caresearch-palliative-care/>

Facebook: CareSearch Project

Further project information, research articles, and details on resources available on request. Email: [jennifer.tieman@flinders.edu.au](mailto:jennifer.tieman@flinders.edu.au)